

1921

# THE HALIFAX EXPLOSION

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I saw the sun in splendor rise,  
On a fair December morn ;  
'Twas like a day in early Spring,  
So peaceful was the dawn.

But ere that day had far advanced  
We heard a fearful sound,  
And the North End of our City lay  
In ruins on the ground.

From North Street up to Rockingham,  
That awful carnage spread ;  
The Richmond Heights were strewn that day  
With the dying and the dead.

'Twas nineteen hundred and seventeen,  
On the sixth day of December,  
The sound I heard on that bright morn  
I always will remember.

'Twas like a hundred cannon  
All blended into one,  
But little did we realize  
The vast damage it had done.

No living man could comprehend,  
When he felt that mighty shock,  
The damage it spread broadcast,  
Along our Halifax Docks.

Some lay bleeding on the ground,  
In a terrible condition ;  
And some were cut by flying glass  
Beyond all recognition.

There were hundreds met an instant death,  
Upon that fatal day,  
While some were caught and burned alive,  
As they in the ruins lay.

You may ponder o'er sad sights you've seen,  
When you are all alone ;  
But the sights in Halifax that day,  
Would melt a heart of stone.

The sun shone bright and warm,  
And pleasant did it seem,  
When the Mont Blanc and the Imo  
Crashed together in the stream.

The Mont Blanc was blown to atoms---  
We ne'er shall see her more---  
While the Imo, she was driven hard  
Upon the Dartmouth shore.

The power of that explosion  
You may well understand,  
When the Mont Blanc's gun was blown  
Three miles back o'er the land.

The town of Dartmouth has the gun,  
A relic of that blast  
Can be seen before the Greenvale School,  
Any time you may go past.

The maimed you meet in Halifax,  
Would stir your heart with pity ;  
The memories of a sad, sad day,  
In that fair Canadian city.

Some are minus arms and legs,  
And some were stricken blind,  
And some will go down to their graves  
With a sad, enfeebled mind

'Twas nine o'clock in the morning---  
Or about five minutes past---  
When twelve hundred souls in that fair town  
Gazed on this world their last.

There were hundreds on that morning,  
Who left the Richmond slopes  
To toil for wives and children dear,  
With high and lofty hopes.

But little did those poor men think,  
Ere that day was half-way through,  
The farewell they said that morning  
Would be their last adieu.

To describe the scenes, that fatal sixth,  
Is far beyond my power,  
But will remain within my memory,  
Until my dying hour.

Four long years have passed and gone,  
Since that great catastrophe,  
Since that fatal ship's arrival,  
With that powerful T. N. T.

That fatal high explosive,  
Whose power no man doth know,  
Which wiped out those precious human lives,  
And laid our City low.

Some fragments of the Mont Blanc  
Were scattered far and wide ;  
While some were sunk forever,  
Beneath the foaming tide.

She shouldn't have been allowed in port,  
The people all will say ;  
But she was, and thus we have  
The tragedy of that day.

But whoever was responsible  
For that blunder, or that crime,  
Must answer at God's Judgment Bar,  
When they reach the end of time.

When good old Boston heard the news,  
She answered like a flash,  
And sent us food and clothing,  
And likewise men and cash.

God bless our neighbors to the South ;  
God bless them one and all,  
Who always comes in time of need,  
To humanity's urgent call.

She heard the news that morning,  
And before another day  
She had her cars in readiness  
And started on the way.

They sent us their trained nurses,  
And sent them with a will ;  
And in the medical line, the best  
Of Massachusetts' skill.

They attended to our cut and torn,  
In an earnest, faithful manner ;  
Those ministering angels in our midst,  
From beneath that Starry Banner.

We never shall forget them,  
Till we go to our grave ;  
And may the flag of freedom,  
Forever o'er them wave.

CLARK HALL,  
Milton, Queens County.



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